



## FAMILY ECONOMIC SUCCESS POLICY RESOURCE CENTER

### PAY DISPARITY FACT SHEET

#### BRIEF OVERVIEW

Women's participation in the workforce has steadily increased over the last several decades to account for nearly half of all workers. Despite this, women's earnings across almost all occupations are still below those of men. Women earn less even within the jobs that women are more likely to hold, such as secretaries, teachers, and nurses. The wage ratio in the 10 most common occupations for women ranges from 71.2 percent of men's earnings for retail sales managers to 93.6 percent of men's earnings for customer service representatives. [1]

Pay disparity effects women from all backgrounds. U.S. Census data for all occupations shows that in each racial and ethnic group, men have higher median weekly earnings than women. Pay disparity effects more than female workers. Lower wages for women also have a negative impact on the children supported by these women. If these women are married, their husbands suffer the costs of the lower family wages as well. Pay equity legislation protects the right of women to receive equal pay for comparable work, prevents wage discrimination based on gender, and improves the financial stability of families, especially those headed by women.

[1] Institute for Women's Policy Research

#### PAY DISPARITY FACTS

- In 2007, women's median annual paychecks reflected only 78 cents for every \$1.00 earned by men. Specifically for women of color, the gap is even wider: In comparison to men's dollar, African American women earn only 69 cents and Latinas just 59 cents. (National Committee on Pay Equity)
- Women's median pay was less than men's in each and every one of the 20 industries and 25 occupational groups surveyed by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2007. Even men working in female-dominated occupations tend to earn more than women working in those same occupations. (Institute for Women's Policy Research)
- In 2008, median weekly earnings for women working full-time were \$638, or 79.9% of the median weekly earnings for men working full-time, at \$798. (U.S. Current Population Survey)
- In 2007, female financial advisors earned 53.7% of the median weekly wages of male financial advisors, and women in sales occupations earned just 64.8% of men's wages in equivalent positions. (The Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- In 2006, the median annual earnings for black men was 72% of white men's median annual earnings, and the median annual earnings for white women was just over 73% of white men's median annual earnings. (U.S. Current Population Survey and the National Committee on Pay Equity)

*Updated: June 2009*